

PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

April 25, 2006

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Madison, Wisconsin -- Stephen P. Sinnott, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that Dennis E. Gutknecht, 44, of Black River Falls, Wisconsin, was sentenced today by Chief U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to four months in prison, followed by one year of supervised release. Gutknecht pleaded guilty to filing false statements with the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) on February 13, 2006.

The evidence showed that Gutknecht sought to harass and intimidate numerous individuals for their various roles in connection with his 1999 Buffalo County, Wisconsin, Circuit Court conviction. The individuals included social workers, a psychologist, a district attorney, judges, his own defense attorney, and the two victims of his crime. In a scheme designed to trigger an IRS investigation of these individuals, Gutknecht falsely reported to the IRS that these individuals engaged in illegal cash transactions involving millions of dollars. Gutknecht's motivation appears to have been retaliation.

Judge Crabb noted that although the defendant seems to have taken some positive steps in his life, he caused distress to a lot of people. Judge Crabb further stated that some prison time was necessary because Gutknecht harassed a number of different people, and worst of all, he harassed the victims related to his 1999 state case.

The charges against Gutknecht were the result of an investigation conducted by

Criminal Investigators with the Internal Revenue Service. Prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Laura A. Przybylinski Finn.

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